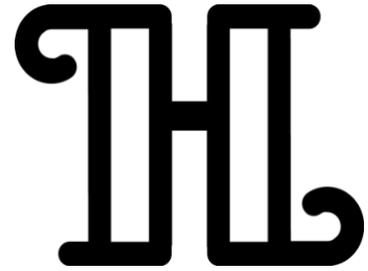


**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contacts:** Andrea Saffle  
Executive Director, HHDA  
[andrea@downtownhattiesburg.com](mailto:andrea@downtownhattiesburg.com)  
601.270.1373

Paige Crane  
Director of Communications, VisitHBURG  
[pcrane@visithburg.org](mailto:pcrane@visithburg.org)  
601.410.6508



**DOWNTOWN SPRING ART WALK  
SET FOR SATURDAY, MARCH 24**

**HATTIESBURG (March 20, 2018)** — The Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association will host its annual Spring Art Walk on Saturday, March 24 from 3 p.m. until 7 p.m. in downtown Hattiesburg. Art Walk is free and open to the public.

Spring Art Walk will offer unique finds from a variety of local artists, artisan crafters, and retailers through pop-up shops and open storefronts. Throughout the evening, participants can enjoy live performances by local musicians in the streets as well as at several downtown businesses. Main and Front Streets will be blocked to encourage pedestrians to freely explore all of Art Walk's offerings.

Guests of all ages can enjoy two events hosted by Hattiesburg Arts Council during Spring Art Walk. HAC's "Color My World" exhibit will be on display at the Cultural Center throughout the evening. Additionally, HAC's kid-friendly activity zone, smART Space, will entertain families on Front Street for the duration of Art Walk. The free, open space encourages young artists to be creative with coloring, chalk drawings and other fun activities.

"With the streets closed and most downtown businesses open late, locals and visitors can plan to bring the whole family, grab a bite, shop vendors, and enjoy the evening's events. Additionally, the new Go-Cup zone will be active during Art Walk, so adults of age can safely shop while enjoying a beverage," Andrea Saffle, executive director of Hattiesburg Downtown Association, said.

The Go-Cup zone, which was passed in late 2017, encompasses all Downtown restaurants and pubs and allows patrons 21 years or older to carry alcoholic beverages outside establishments. The zone permits walking in the designated area if participating, not driving.

Additionally, Downtown Hattiesburg is selling exclusive tshirts at ArtWalk in adult and youth sizes. The Spring Art Walk 2018 tshirt or tank top can be purchased online in advance through Downtown's Facebook page, website home page, or the day of the event from the information booth. Advance purchase is encouraged to guarantee size preference.

HHDA is also offering the original "Hattiesburger" shirt, designed locally by Jason LeViere. The shirt will feature the male burger with glasses.

"We are delighted to bring back this adored design and are thankful to Jason for giving a fun look to the 'Hattiesburger' name. These will be exclusively sold by the Downtown Association at events and online after Art Walk," Saffle said.

The City of Hattiesburg will also debut new street lighting. The City has installed string lights high above Main and Front Streets to enhance safety and walkability in the downtown experience.

"The installation of additional lighting on Main Street and Front Street is another element that will allow us to compete with other destinations as a premier, destination city in the Gulf South," Mayor Toby Barker said. "With that as the ultimate goal, we will continue to pay attention to details that have a major impact on how our residents and visitors experience downtown and all of Hattiesburg's neighborhoods."

The Hattiesburg Trolley will be running from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. Saturday afternoon in conjunction with Art Walk. Attendees can ride the trolley from a number of locations around town for free. More information about stops and times can be found on the Hattiesburg Trolley Facebook page.

During Spring Art Walk, attendees can stop by the Downtown Hattiesburg and VisitHATTIESBURG booth for a detailed map of Art Walk's vendor offerings, event tshirts, and other information. For a list of Art Walk artists, vendors and activities, visit the association's Facebook page.

Shops and galleries open for Art Walk include: OddFellows Gallery, the Kress Gallery, The Open Studio on Front, McKenzie's on Main, Old Town Gifts, Southern Fried Comics, Main Street Books and others.

Downtown restaurants and pubs open during Art Walk include Bianchi's Pizzeria, The End Zone, Front Street Bar, Town Square Cafe, Twin Forks Wine & Provisions, The Porter, SoPro Taproom, and Blu Jazz Café.

*Since its founding in 1985, Downtown Hattiesburg, a Mississippi Main Street program, has spearheaded the revitalization of Hattiesburg's historic core through partnerships to focus its growth and development on the Main Street Four Point Approach of the National Main Street Center: Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Vitality. The Hattiesburg Downtown Association's core mission is the revitalization and historic preservation of the Downtown district, making Downtown the vibrant and creative center of Hattiesburg. Through its membership program and self-promoted events, the Association is able to market and educate investors, developers, entrepreneurs, businesses, shoppers, visitors and residents, that downtown Hattiesburg is a destination - a place to live, work, and play.*

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